

with his wife Jane, his children/Darrin, Dean, and Dawn, his eight grandchildren, and the entire Landry family

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

HONORING RON MIZUTANI

• Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, today I wish to honor a great storyteller with a passion and deep empathy for the people of Hawaii. After a 20-year career in television journalism, Ron Mizutani announced this week that he will be leaving his post as news anchor and reporter for a top rated Honolulu newscast to pursue interests outside of journalism.

Ron exemplifies Hawaii's melting pot, our diverse human landscape rich with the contributions of unique cultures from around the Pacific and across the globe. His desire to make the islands he grew up in a better place for the future, while cherishing the cultures of old, is well known throughout Hawaii. Drawing on his personal heritage from Asia, Europe, and Hawaii's indigenous peoples, Native Hawaiians, Ron crossed cultural lines and played a major role in bringing the diverse people of Hawaii together into a cohesive unit.

In his writing, Ron was true to the language and style of the islands. A proud graduate of my alma mater, Kamehameha Schools, Ron's colleagues routinely turned to him whenever they needed help with the pronunciation of a Hawaiian word or a greater understanding of traditional practices.

Ron started his career as a sportscaster, and with time and experience moved into news reporting. He is one of the only in-studio anchors that would actually go out, get dirty and cover news in the field on location. As Ron's longtime photographer partner Greg Lau proudly recalls a day when an unusual storm generated high surf along the North-East shores of the islands, topping the beaches and coming into people's homes. Ron put his story second, jumping into the dangerous surf and ruining his clothes to help stack sandbags and salvage what could be saved. That was the part of the story viewers never knew, but colleagues certainly did.

Telling stories about the people, places, and issues facing the islands of Hawaii was Ron's kuleana, or duty. Ron took his kuleana seriously. His work captured the soul of the islands and he came to work every day with a mission to tell his story in a way that was compelling while remaining true to the issues at hand. More importantly, he refused to sensationalize the news.

Ron's storytelling ran the gamut: from entering homeless camps to tell the stories of the real people who had hit hard times amidst the islands' soaring property prices, following a local boy turned New York Mets hitter Benny Agbayani in his big moment in

the World Series, the bittersweet celebration of a Native Hawaiian man who got his piece of Hawaiian Homelands after 50 years on a waiting list, to flying to the face of hurricanes to keeping Hawaii residents safe and informed, Ron always went to great lengths to shed light on stories he knew needed to be told.

Mr. President, Ron's contribution to Hawaii's understanding of itself and its people will be sorely missed. We wish him well in his future endeavors.●

TRIBUTE TO COLONEL RUSSELL M. OPLAND

• Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, today I commend a distinguished public servant, the commander of Delaware Civil Air Patrol, COL Russell M. Opland.

Civil Air Patrol, CAP, is the official auxiliary of the U.S. Air Force, and is comprised entirely of civilian volunteers. It was formed on the shores of Delaware and New Jersey in 1941 to patrol coastal waters for enemy submarines. The wing commander is the senior corporate officer within a CAP Wing and is responsible to the Civil Air Patrol Corporation and to the regional commander for ensuring that corporate objectives, policies, and operational directives are executed within the Wing.

CAP has three missions: cadet programs, emergency services, and aerospace education. The cadet program provides youth, ages 12-21, the opportunity to serve their communities and develop into responsible citizens, inspiring them to become the next generation of pilots, engineers, mechanics, and aviation enthusiasts. As part of the emergency services mission, CAP performs 95 percent of inland aerial search and rescue missions in the continental U.S. CAP volunteers also perform homeland security, disaster relief, and counterdrug missions at the request of Federal, State, and local agencies.

Colonel Opland has led the Delaware Wing of the CAP since August 2003 and will step down on September 8, 2007. He has volunteered an average of 38 hours a week to the people of Delaware and the CAP cadets while still keeping his full time job as chief privacy and information security officer for the University of Pennsylvania Health System.

During his tenure as commander, Colonel Opland earned significant awards and honors including the following: four Exceptional Service Awards, three Meritorious Service Awards, the Gill Robb Wilson Award, No. 2074, Delaware Wing Senior Member of the Year, the Air Force Association, AFA, Award for Outstanding CAP Achievements, "Outstanding" rating as Commander, 2005 Wing Compliance Inspection, and "Outstanding" rating as Incident Commander, 2003 Evaluated SAR/DR exercise.

In addition to his personal awards, Colonel Opland led the Delaware Wing to national recognition. Despite the Wing's small size, Colonel Opland's at-

tention to operational detail and discipline allowed the Delaware Wing to log the most flying hours of any CAP wing in the nation, resulting in the wing receiving three new aircraft. For each of the past four years, Delaware cadets participating in national drill team and/or color guard competitions placed third or higher.

I commend Colonel Opland for his dedication to aerospace education, to helping build young enthusiasts who believe in volunteering, and to the vital aerial missions that help keep Delaware and the Nation more secure. It is the tireless work of citizens like him that make this Nation great.

PROJECT COMPASSION

• Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, today I honor the work of an organization dedicated to preserving the memory of our service men and women who have died on active duty since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.

Project Compassion has dedicated itself to providing one gallery-quality portrait of every one of these fallen heroes to their designated next of kin at no cost to the family. Project Compassion started in the spring of 2003 in the State of Utah, when a local artist named Kaziah Hancock learned of the death of a fellow Utah resident who was serving in Iraq. She located the soldier's family and painted a free portrait for them as a gift of her appreciation. She then decided to paint as many portraits of our fallen men and women as her personal time and savings would allow. For more than 5 years, she has refused to take a single dollar from anyone who has received a painting.

And in these last 5 years, Project Compassion has never faltered in its mission to provide a tangible "thank-you" to the families of the brave men and women who have fallen in service to our country. That mission has required the addition of four more artists, all of whom dedicate their time to be a part of the effort. In November 2004, Project Compassion teamed up with Marie Woolf, a California-based creative media director, who agreed to manage and publicize the project. She worked to establish crucial relationships with the media, government, and the armed services to fulfill the Project Compassion mission.

All of the military services except for the Army now include Project Compassion information with the standard paperwork personally delivered by casualty officers. However, Project Compassion is one of the Army's few third party organizations approved to contact next of kin who have given their consent to be contacted. Project Compassion is also a member of America Supports You, a Defense Department program connecting citizens and corporations with military personnel and their families serving at home and abroad.

As of July, over 600 portraits have been completed and delivered to the

families of our fallen servicemen and women. Project Compassion has earned major international, national, local, and military media recognition of its unusual service, including from CNN, CBS, NBC, and PBS, and it is certainly well-deserved.

Mr. President, the story of Project Compassion is one of which we can all be proud. It is a story of everyday Americans bringing comfort to those who have lost a loved one in uniform. Ms. Hancock has taken her gifts as an artist and used them to honor people she has never met and never known. But she has stated that "These soldiers and their families are our buddies, they are our family as Americans, and we love them." I am proud to honor the work of Project Compassion today.

HONORING HAL POTE

• Mr. BROWN. President, today I pay tribute to the life and legacy of Harold Pote. Hal, the founder and president of the Spina Bifida Foundation, SBF, passed away suddenly on June 26, 2007. My staff and I are deeply saddened by this loss, which is felt not only by his friends and family but by many of us on Capitol Hill. My staff and I first had the pleasure of becoming acquainted with Mr. Pote nearly 6 years ago when he began a campaign to increase congressional awareness of—and the national attention paid to—spina bifida, the Nation's most common, permanently disabling birth defect.

Hal's nephew Gregory was born with spina bifida almost 22 years ago. Spina bifida occurs in the first month of pregnancy when the spinal column does not close completely. In the United States, spina bifida occurs in approximately 7 out of 10,000 live births and currently there are 70,000 men, women, adolescents, and children living with spina bifida. Hal supported his nephew through more than 20 surgeries and was there to share in many wonderful moments, including the moment in 2004 when Gregory carried the Olympic torch. Hal was dedicated to ensuring that Gregory and others living with spina bifida enjoy a high quality of life. He also maintained a steadfast commitment to helping prevent spina bifida by promoting efforts to educate women of childbearing age about the importance of daily consumption of a multivitamin containing folic acid.

Hal joined with a group of colleagues to form the Spina Bifida Foundation in 1999. In its 8 years of existence, the SBF, under Hal's steadfast leadership, made remarkable progress on behalf of the spina bifida community. Not so long ago people born with spina bifida did not live past their teenage years. Thanks to research and outreach enabled in part by Hal's exceptionally effective foundation, many children with spina bifida are now living to be adults and are enjoying a higher quality of life than previous generations.

Hal's achievements go beyond his philanthropy and advocacy on behalf of

people with spina bifida. He was born in Penns Grove, NJ, in 1946 and received his bachelor's degree in economics from Princeton in 1968, and his M.B.A. from Harvard Business School in 1972. In 1984, at the age of 37, he was named chairman and CEO of Fidelity Bank. Hal left Fidelity in 1989 and that same year co-founded the PFR, a private real estate group, which was later acquired by Prologis. In 1993, Hal co-founded the Beacon Group, a Manhattan-based investment partnership later acquired by Chase Manhattan. He led Chase's regional banking group and after that bank merged with JP Morgan he became chairman of retail financial services for JP Morgan Chase. After retiring from JP Morgan Chase, Hal returned to Philadelphia in 2006 to serve as CEO of the American Financial Realty Trust.

Hal Pote's sudden death is a tragedy. Yet his life was a triumph. I offer my heartfelt condolences to his family—his wife Linda Johnson, his mother Lucille Bock Pote, his two brothers Frank and Corey Pote, and his nephews.

I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating the life and honoring the many achievements of this extraordinary man.

TRIBUTE TO BRADLEY BUTLER

• Mr. BUNNING. Mr. President, today I pay tribute to Bradley Butler of Paducah, KY, for his accomplishments in the 2007 SkillsUSA State Competition.

SkillsUSA is a national partnership of students, teachers and industry, working together to ensure America has a skilled workforce. SkillsUSA chapters help students who are preparing for careers in technical, skilled and service occupations excel. Formerly known as VICA, Vocational Industrial Clubs of America, SkillsUSA has more than 280,000 students and instructors as members annually.

Mr. Butler, a student at Paducah Area Technology Center and a junior at Paducah Tilghman High School, completed this competition as a gold medalist with a first place finish in related technical math. His success serves as an inspiration for his peers to achieve academically and give back to society.

I now ask my fellow colleagues to join me in congratulating Mr. Butler for his remarkable achievement and commitment to his education.

TRIBUTE TO MAYSVILLE COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE

• Mr. BUNNING. Mr. President, today I pay tribute to the faculty and staff of Maysville Community and Technical College for their efforts in promoting student engagement, service learning, and community service.

Maysville Community and Technical College is an exceptional venue for Kentucky students wishing to continue their education. M.C.T.C. offers several

degree, diploma, and certificate programs to the surrounding region. They also offer several opportunities through the Kentucky Virtual University and degree programs in association with Morehead State University, Lindsey Wilson College, Midway College, and Northern Kentucky University.

This year, Maysville Community and Technical College is working to increase levels of student engagement by promoting organized service activities and community-based partnerships in order to provide a valuable learning experience for its students. This initiative teaches students essential civic responsibility and critical networking skills, while improving the local community.

I now ask my fellow colleagues to join me in congratulating the Maysville Community and Technical College for creating a solid foundation for the future of Kentucky and the United States.

TRIBUTE TO ALLEN THOMPSON

• Mr. BUNNING. Mr. President, today I pay tribute to Allen Thompson of Hickory, KY, for his accomplishments in the 2007 SkillsUSA State Competition.

SkillsUSA is a national partnership of students, teachers and industry, working together to ensure America has a skilled workforce. SkillsUSA chapters help students who are preparing for careers in technical, skilled and service occupations excel. Formerly known as VICA, Vocational Industrial Clubs of America, SkillsUSA has more than 280,000 students and instructors as members annually.

Mr. Thompson, a student at Paducah Area Technology Center and a senior at Graves County High School, completed this competition as a gold medalist with a first place finish in board drafting. His success serves as an inspiration for his peers to achieve academically and give back to society.

I now ask my fellow colleagues to join me in congratulating Mr. Thompson for his remarkable achievement and commitment to his education.

RECOGNIZING ROGER MADSEN

• Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, I would like to recognize an Idahoan who since 1995 has served four Idaho Governors as director of the Idaho Department of Labor and twice served as interim executive director of the Idaho Commission on the Arts. He also served as an Idaho assistant attorney general and as an Idaho State senator for 4 years. After 12 years, Roger Madsen is among the longest-serving State employment agency directors in the Nation, and he is my friend.

Roger has been a tireless volunteer for the betterment of his community and State. The list of his activities and leadership is long and prestigious. Roger has served as: delegate to the White House Conference on Families;